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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Wednesday, April 3, 1935

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "HOW DID THEIR GARDENS GROW." Information from the Extension Service, U.S.D.A.

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The time is past when Mistress Mary grows silver bells and cockle shells in her garden. The modern Mistress Mary is an enthusiastic vegetable gardener. She raises fresh products for her family's table in summer and cans the surplus for winter--yes, and sometimes she also sells her garden vegetables at her own roadside market and helps out the family income. And Mistress Mary is no longer contrary. She follows the advice of her State college experts when she gardens. She also reads government bulletins on the subject and raises her vegetables scientifically.

Just to prove it, I'm going to read you some letters women in different parts of the country have written to the Extension Service reporting on the success of their home gardens last year. By the way, maybe some of these letters might give you some new ideas for your 1935 garden.

Here's a letter from Mrs. Searson of Seabrook, South Carolina. She says: "My year-round garden has been a great help to me and my family of eight during the past year. I planted a large variety of winter vegetables last fall including seven types of greens. My family voted mustard spinach the best for table use. I sold many rutabagas, some at the club market and some at the Savannah market. I also raised the best winter beets I have ever seen. My pole beans were one of my best sellers. I sold every one I could spare and they began bearing about the middle of May. Proceeds from these beans alone were about fifteen dollars."

And speaking about raising beans, Mrs. W. M. Smith of Prospect, Grant Parish, Louisiana, has an interesting story. She writes that year before last she bought and planted five cents worth of bean seed. From this seed she produced all the green beans her family could eat fresh and enough to fill twenty quart cans. She also had plenty left for seed. This seed made up last year's garden supply. It provided fresh beans for the table during the summer, sixty quarts canned for winter, twenty pounds dried, and also seed for this year's garden--all from one nickel.

Another enthusiastic Louisiana gardener is Mrs. Sam Lavigne. Two years ago she and her family knew nothing about farming or gardening and were on relief. But that year the home demonstration agent in her county gave her both seed and directions for raising vegetables. She followed instructions and last year had one of the best gardens in the county. She raised enough vegetables both to eat and to can and sold more than anyone else in her community. In fact, she did so well that her family was removed from the relief roll. Her tomatoes were the best in the parish and she sold \$243 worth. She also raised corn, beans and other vegetables.

Here is the story of an Oregon family garden as told by another woman gardener.

"This year the pitfalls of a first-year garden are passed and we have a bigger and better garden. We planted and canned for one more this year--our little son who is now a year old, eats everything with a garden to provide for his needs. All the other children have grown big and strapping, have not had a day of sickness for fifteen months, and never require a laxative or tonic anymore. The oldest, who is nearly fifteen, is as large as his father. All are glad to help in the garden because it means good eats and plenty of them. Our garden this year will completely provide us with wholesome vegetables the whole year through. It means money saved to be used in finishing our home and even getting some of the luxury items."

Here's a garden story from Montana:

"Our family consists of three adults and four children. We selected two acres of our best land on the farm for our garden. I know that this was a generous amount but we wanted to be sure to have plenty. Before we started planting, my husband worked it into an ideal seed bed with disc and harrow and then marked the rows with the corn planter making it easier to cultivate with the plow. That made the rows straighter and the planting quicker than with the old twine-string method.

"The seeding was the family part. Even small brother and sister could plant the onion sets, peas and beans. Big sister had the rows next to the road for her dahlias and gladioli. No small part of the enjoyment of our garden was the interest the children took in it.

"We planted all the vegetables of the usual kitchen garden on the side next to the road. Then we put in tomatoes, cabbages and cucumbers in alternating rows with the sweet corn. As our rows ran north and south they got plenty of sunshine. As soon as the corn was too old for table use, we saved the ears and used them for seed and cut the stalks for the cows, thus making more room for the fast-spreading vines. We planted one-fourth acre to early potatoes and navy beans and about three-fourth acres to late potatoes.

"We had so many vegetables to can and dry and store for winter that our winter grocery bill for the family of seven has been less than five dollars a month this winter. Of course, we have our own meat, eggs, milk and butter. We had a surplus of vegetables from the garden, but how we enjoyed giving it away."

Well, there are the stories. Now for some news. The news is about some gardening bulletins that may be of help to you if you are raising your own vegetables this season. We have a supply of these bulletins now waiting on our shelves and you can have a copy free as long as the supply lasts. If you live in town, but have a free back yard or vacant lot for gardening, you'll be interested in a bulletin called "The City Home Garden," Farmers' Bulletin No. 1044.

If you live on a farm, you'll want "The Farm Garden"--Farmers' Bulletin No. 1673. You'll also find a bulletin called "Permanent Fruit and Vegetable Gardens" interesting and helpful--"Permanent Fruit and Vegetable Gardens"--Farmers' Bulletin No. 1242. Write for any one of these bulletins to the U. S. Department of Agriculture at Washington, D. C.
